

# 1 Chronicles

## Chapter 17

*The LORD's Covenant with David*

Now when David lived in his house, David said to Nathan the prophet, “Behold, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of the covenant of the LORD is under a tent.” 2 And Nathan said to David, “Do all that is in your heart, for God is with you.” 3 But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, 4 “Go and tell my servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD: It is not you who will build me a house to dwell in. 5 For I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up Israel to this day, but I have gone from tent to tent and from dwelling to dwelling. 6 In all places where I have moved with all Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?”’ 7 Now, therefore, thus shall you say to my servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be prince over my people Israel, 8 and I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. 9 And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall waste them no more, as formerly, 10 from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will subdue all your enemies. Moreover, I declare to you that the LORD will build you a house. 11 When your days are fulfilled to walk with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. 12 He shall build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever. 13 I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from him who was before you, 14 but I will confirm him in my house and in my kingdom forever, and his throne shall be established forever.’” 15 In accordance with all these words, and in accordance with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

**17:1–15** Though Nathan the prophet gives David advice to “do all that is in your heart” (vv 1–2), the Lord will reverse this counsel (vv 3–15). (TLSB)

**17:1, 10** In these verses the Chronicler omits the statement that David had rest from his enemies (2Sa 7:1, 11). Several factors may be at work in this omission: 1. The account of David’s major wars is yet to come (chs. 18–20). Chronologically, this passage should follow the account of the wars (v. 8), but the author has placed it here to continue his concern with the ark and the building of the temple (vv. 4–6, 12). 2. The Chronicler also views David as a man of war through most of his life (22:6–8), in contrast to Solomon, who is the man of “peace and rest” (22:9) and who will build the temple (22:10). For the Chronicler, David has rest from enemies only late in his life (22:18). 3. As part of his concern to parallel David and Solomon to Moses and Joshua, Solomon (like Joshua) brings the people to rest from enemies. (CSB)

**17:1** *under a tent*. Lit, “under the curtains.” David did not want to continue to leave the ark, the symbolic throne of the God of Israel, under a makeshift shelter (16:1) while he occupied regal quarters built of cedar. Cf Hg 1:4 for a similar situation. (TLSB)

**17:3–15** The Lord’s Word encompasses several points. David is not the one who will build the temple (v 4). The Lord had never required a “house of cedar” in the past (vv 5–6). David must remember that he is ruler of Israel only because the Lord has established him who once was but a shepherd boy (vv 7–10). The real issue is whether David recognizes that the Lord has built his house (or dynasty; v 10). Finally,

David's son will build a house for the Lord (vv 11–15). The removal of the Lord's steadfast love would not happen to Solomon as it happened to Saul (10:13–14). (TLSB)

**17:5** *tent to tent*. The ark, which represented God's presence to the people, had been in the tabernacle, the temple of Dagon, at the threshing floors of Kiriath-jearim and Obed-edom, and finally in Jerusalem, where it dwelt in a tent (16:1–7). (TLSB)

**17:6** *house of cedar?* What David built for himself. (TLSB)

**17:8** *name*. A reputation. (TLSB)

**17:10** *house*. A dynasty. (TLSB)

**17:12–14** Though in this context these words refer to Solomon, the NT applies them to Jesus (Mk 1:11; Lk 1:32–33; Heb 1:5). (CSB)

**17:12** *I will establish his throne forever*. Ter: “[This] is more suitable to Christ, God's Son, than to Solomon,—a temporal king.... For at the present day nations are invoking Christ which used not to know Him” (ANF 3:173). (TLSB)

**17:13** The Chronicler omits from his source (2Sa 7:14) any reference to “punishment with the rod” or “flogging” as discipline for Solomon. This omission reflects his idealization of Solomon as a Messianic figure, for whom such punishment would not be appropriate (see Introduction: Portrait of David and Solomon). (CSB)

**17:14** The Chronicler introduces his own concerns by the changes in the pronouns found in his source (2Sa 7:16); instead of “Your house and your kingdom,” the Chronicler reads “my house and my kingdom.” This same emphasis on theocracy (God's rule) is found in several other passages unique to Chronicles (28:5–6; 29:23; 2Ch 1:11; 9:8; 13:4–8). (CSB)

**17:14** *My house ... kingdom*. David would participate in God's. (TLSB)

kingdom, Israel (cf Ex 19:6). (TLSB)

*forever*. Anticipation of the eternal kingdom and life that the Lord bestows in the new creation. (TLSB)

*David's Prayer*

**16** Then King David went in and sat before the LORD and said, “Who am I, O LORD God, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? **17** And this was a small thing in your eyes, O God. You have also spoken of your servant's house for a great while to come, and have shown me future generations, O LORD God! **18** And what more can David say to you for honoring your servant? For you know your servant. **19** For your servant's sake, O LORD, and according to your own heart, you have done all this greatness, in making known all these great things. **20** There is none like you, O LORD, and there is no God besides you, according to all that we have heard with our ears. **21** And who is like your people Israel, the one nation on earth whom God went to redeem to be his people, making for yourself a name for great and awesome things, in driving out nations before your people whom you redeemed from Egypt? **22** And you made your people Israel to be your people forever, and you, O LORD, became their God. **23** And now, O LORD, let the word that you have spoken concerning your servant and concerning his house be established forever, and do as you have spoken, **24** and your name will be established and magnified forever, saying, ‘The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, is Israel's God,’ and the house of your servant David will be established before

**you. 25 For you, my God, have revealed to your servant that you will build a house for him. Therefore your servant has found courage to pray before you. 26 And now, O LORD, you are God, and you have promised this good thing to your servant. 27 Now you have been pleased to bless the house of your servant, that it may continue forever before you, for it is you, O LORD, who have blessed, and it is blessed forever.”**

**17:16** *went in*. David entered the tent of the ark. (TLSB)

*sat*. Aside from its parallel in 2Sa 7:18, this is the only reference in the OT to sitting as a posture for prayer. (CSB)

Only reference to sitting as a position of prayer found in the OT. (TLSB)

*Who am I*. David understands that he has received kingship and an eternal promise not through his own merit but solely because God is gracious. Cf 29:10–19. (TLSB)

**17:17** *shown me future generations*. Described by Nathan’s prophecy (vv 11–14), perhaps accompanied by a vision. (TLSB)

**17:20** *all that we have heard*. The reading of the Law and the testimony of God’s deeds. Cf Ps 145:10–12. (TLSB)

**17:21–22** The references to the exodus from Egypt would remind the Chronicler’s audience of the second great exodus, the release of the restoration community from the period of Babylonian captivity. (CSB)

**17:24** David seems to recite a liturgical text that has a credal character. (TLSB)